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THE TOWN.

A SATIRE.

Oh! that I'd had in thoſe bleſt Times my Birth,
E'er Coxcomb Pies, or Coxcombs were on Earth.

POPE.

By *W. KENRICK.*

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THE

TOWN.

A

SATIRE.

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WISE was the Clown who, when he firſt deſcried
London, the Seat of Vanity and Pride,
And ſaw the Clouds that o'er it's Turrets ſpread,
Gravely ſtood ſtill and ſhook his cautious Head:
What can this mean? the Portent is not good!
See, Heav'n has mark'd it with a ſulph'rous Cloud!

Some Danger's near, this Warning is not vain!
Then turn'd him back, and travell'd home again.

How happy they who never yet have known
The num'rous Follies of the noiſy Town,
Where Affectation joins to low Conceit,
And fills with Coxcombs ev'ry crowded Street;
All ſeek intent for what is new To-day,
And Noiſe and Nonſenſe bear them all away.
At *Paulin*'s, *Long*'s, behold the glorious Trade,
How the Fools ſwarm to get in Maſquerade;
That's done To-night — To-morrow ſomething new
Again with equal Appetite purſue.
To *Broughton*'s ſee the tender Stripling goes
To hear the Battle and to ſee the Blows.

Some * *H*----'s calls, where ſnuffing Punſters meet,
And all the Company is plagu'd with Wit:
So great the Virtue of the ſtrong *Rappee*,
That ev'ry Pinch creates a Repartee!
Strange Power in Duſt! be *H*----'s all the Gain,
Whoſe wond'rous Art can thus affect the Brain;
Strait let his Shop commence a publick School,
To teach the Blockhead and inſtruct the Fool.
'Twas here the Player took his firſt Degrees,
Who wrote a Farce, then help'd his Farce to pleaſe;
Here, firſt eſtabliſh'd, was he call'd a Wit,
And ſince has charm'd the World with what he writ.
In vain dull Songſters † *Woman*'s Praiſe rehearſe,
His *Peggy* proves the mighty Power of Verſe,

His

* A Place of Reſort among ſome Wits.

† A barbarous and favourite Song on Woman, at *Vaux Hall*.

His *Vocal Shell*, what Shell ſoe'er it be,
Speaks a juſt Taſte of ſenſeleſs Poetry:
Pleas'd may the *Fair review each charming Line,
By her inſpir'd; and think herſelf divine:
Yet, Oh! how mortal on a ſudden grown,
To be the ſing-ſong Ballad of the Town.
Hail, mighty *G----k*, Chief amidſt the Throng,
Of leading Nonſenſe and of Apiſh Song;
To thee, with Joy, the Herd of Fools ſubmit,
And *Curſe me Fellow*'s current Coin for Wit,
Thy keeneſt Satire bears the ſillieſt Phraſe,
And, Oh! how much unworthy of our Praiſe:
Pleaſing the Character you ſet to View,
(For Fools are ever pleas'd with what is new)
The

* Mrs. *W-f-g-n*.

The mean Infection catches thro' the Street,
And ſee a * *Fribble* ev'ry Fop we meet:
So great the † *fav'rite Work*, ſo learn'd, ſo wiſe;
One Fool is laſh'd, and thence lo! ten ariſe.
A Fool's a reſolute and ſturdy Beaſt,
And thy weak Hand but tickles him at beſt;
How much we owe to ſuch a Pen as thine,
Where Blockheads with the Satyriſt combine,
Firſt taught by thee, they boaſt the ſtrange Pretence,
To ſatire Coxcombs, while they murder Senſe;
Fondly they write each other's Follies down,
And quite forget thoſe Follies are their own.
As once a Fool beheld his antick Face,
And ſaw his Viſage in the Magick Glaſs,
Surpriz'd

* A Character too much known and practis'd to need Explanation.

† *Miſs in her Teens.*

Surpriz'd he ſaw, and this Conſtruction made,
A Man is wond'rous ſtrange with ſuch a Head:
Then laugh'd to view the Oddneſs of the Phiz,
But little thought the monſtrous Picture his.
So when a Fop 'gainſt Fops a Satire reads,
He ſmiles whene'er he thinks the Victim bleeds,
Again the Tale inſenſibly purſues,
And ſtruck afreſh, afreſh the Smile renews.
See 'mongſt the Crowd new endleſs Follies riſe;
Whilſt all for Wit contend, a glorious Prize!
Each Blockhead boaſts how juſt his own Pretence,
And proves how much he wants of common Senſe.
The ſpruce young Templar, or th'affected Cit,
Maintains his Title as a firſt-rate Wit,
Prates of the Play-houſe, — "I was there To-day,
"Saw the Rehearſal of a new writ Play,
"'Bout

" 'Bout which the Manager's in Doubt perplex'd,
" To bring it out this Seaſon, or the next."
Of all the Coxcombs that infeſt the Age,
None like the Politicians of the Stage,
Thoſe Dupes to Wit, who ever boldly ſay
They know as much as others, wiſe as they.
Eternal Bablers! yet they boaſt to know
More than the Managers or Actors do.
Name but a Play, they've ſeen it o'er and o'er,
And Speeches could rehearſe, if need, a Score:
Beg but the Favour they would one repeat,
Puff'd up with Vanity and loud Conceit,
With op'ning Lungs (for never they refuſe
To tear the Product of a worthy Muſe)
They plague your Ears, then fly the Place, or ſtay
To ſee a barb'rous Murder on a Play:

As ſoon I'd go to *Smithfield*'s dirty Fair,
And bear the Gabbling of a ſtroling Player:
As ſoon I'd be in *James-ſtreet* Hovel ſeen,
Where low-liv'd 'Prentices play *Tamerlane*:
Or at the *Wells*, where bawling Butchers wait,
And the fit Theme is wretched *Barnwell*'s Fate:
As wou'd I go where Fools like theſe reſort,
The Curſe of Company, the Publick Sport.

Yet ſay what Place is free from Folly now,
Where do we loſe the Fop's affected Bow,
Where doth the Dunce attentive ſilent ſit,
Or where the Blockhead fear to truſt his Wit?
At *W*----'s behold the Fools and Coxcombs there,
But Fools and Coxcombs in a higher Sphere, There

There Lords and Knights fill up the crowded Room,
And Rakes polite that from the Bagnio come;
There Whiſper, Nonſenſe, Apes, embroider'd Cloaths
Make up the ſweet Society of Beaux:
Senſe, ſcorn'd by all, the worthleſs Houſe denies,
And *W*---'s remains a Box of Butterflies.
Hold, cries a Friend, that at my Elbow ſits,
What meddle with the Great, you've loſt your Wits!
Perchance ſome Lord your Verſes may receive.
And when they've Money, Lords, you know, can give.
Beſides, there's ſome may boaſt a good Pretence,
However ſtrange it ſeem, to Wit and Senſe.
Well, Sir, ſuppoſe your juſt Aſſertion true,
That ſome Great Man is near as wiſe as you;
If 'mongſt the Fools, * St. *James*'s conſtant Gueſt,
How ſhall we know to mark him from the reſt?

* St. *James*'s Coffee-houſe.

But think not I wou'd e'er ſo meanly ſerve,
Shew Verſes to my Lord, then hope and ſtarve:
Such be the Fate of ev'ry rhiming Fool
Who learn'd to pen his wretched Lines at School.
Like *C*----'s ſelf wrote Odes at Twelve to ſhow,
Odes writ at Twelve are better Odes than now.
Dull Aſſes! void of Genius or of Thought,
And write (ſo Parrots prate) as once they're taught.
D----*s* to thoſe he had by Phyſick ſlain,
So ſung to tell 'em how to riſe again;
Finely deſcribes how * broken Members fly,
Odd Legs and Arms how buſtle in the Sky:
(How vaſt the Genius that ſuch Thoughts contains)
So then, if true be his prophetick Strains,
D---*s* perhaps may find his ſcatter'd Brains.

To

* *Vide*, Dr. *D*---*s* Poem on the *Reſurrection*, printed in Folio, 1747.

To low Petitions can the Muſes ſtoop!
See Invocations from a Baker's Shop.
To *Stanhope*'s Name the * mighty Work addreſs'd,
But not by *Stanhope*'s Name it's Worth confeſs'd:
Man's *dreadful* Paſſion was the *dreadful* Verſe,
But † *R——d*'s Paſſion was the greateſt Curſe.
He call'd the Muſe, and begg'd her quick Relief,
In vain he call'd, for oh! the Muſe was deaf.
Then down he ſat and rack'd his brainleſs Head,
And ſwore to write, and writ without her Aid.

Oh! could I hope to catch th' exalted Fires
(Which drop'd from Heav'n) the ſacred Muſe inſpires,
Glad o'er the World, the noiſy World I'd fly,
And taſte the various Beauties of the Sky;

I'd

* A wretched Poem (publiſh'd by Subſcription by the Author) on the *Paſſions of Man*. Dedicated to the Earl of *Cheſterfield*.
† The Author of it.

I'd ſeek the Groves and make the Dwelling mine
Where dwell the Graces and the tuneful Nine,
There wiſh to live in one continu'd Day,
Where bright *Urania* ſings and heavenly Muſes play.

How vain the Wiſh! the Proſpect's vaniſh'd quite!
New Scenes of Folly ruſh upon my Sight.
What loads of Paper deſtin'd to the Preſs
To bear the dull Impreſſions of an Aſs,
Who takes th' Advantage of a ſenſeleſs Age,
And cheats the Reader with a Title Page.
Of ſuch the * *ſolitary*, tuneleſs Ode,
With nought of Solitude nor ought of Good.
Ceaſe, worthleſs Tribe, and give your Scribbling o'er,
If you would gain Applauſe then write no more;

That

* An Ode inſcrib'd to *Ralph Allen*, Eſq; of *Bath*, for which it's conjectur'd the Author has robb'd ſome poor Bell-man of his yearly Verſes.

That Maxim's taught in all our publick Schools,
That Silence is the beſt Recourſe of Fools:
Yet how perverſe ye wander from the Right,
As if you would be Blockheads out of Spight,
Whilſt all your Study and your utmoſt Care
Is to be viler Aſſes than ye are:
Yet each one thinks the more a Fool he grows,
The more he has of Wit, the more he knows,
Thus of all Follies that poſſeſs the Brain,
The Coxcomb's greateſt Curſe is to be vain.
E'en ſacred Temples are not ſacred now,
For Fops and Fools intrude where'er you go,
Tho' Coxcombs ever are too vain to pray,
They go for Company, as to the Play.
See *Clody* enter in the Velvet Pew
(He comes To-day, becauſe his Cloaths are new)

His

His Head he turns, his Body turns withal,
Or elſe the Buckle of his Hair might fall;
He coughs aloud, to tell the Ladies by
Who plagues the Church---Hem!---Ladies ſee---'tis I.
Now down he ſits, ſtill peeping at the Fair,
Pulls out a Mirrour to adjuſt his Hair,
Lays out the *Dreſden*, ſettles ev'ry Pleat,
Each Atom's ſet, his Lap-Dog's ſcarce ſo neat.
But on a ſudden ſee the Mortal grieve,
For, oh! a dreadful Spot upon his Sleeve:
Pain inſupportable! too much to bear;
But Thanks to Heaven, his Cordial Drops are near;
But ſee he goes, and leaves each ſneering Fair,
Forſakes the Biſhop, and the godly Pray'r.

E'en

E'en Prieſts themſelves juſt Satire cannot paſs,
Nor is the Biſhop free if he's an Aſs.
How oft the Chaplain flies from ſerving God,
Strips off his Gown and turns a Man of Mode.
The low Priz'd Reader ſkips the Collects o'er
To get a Breakfaſt with a gen'rous Whore.
In Brothels ſee the Prieſt a lech'rous Swine,
Dead drunk To-night, To-morrow's a Divine.
Theſe, *Britain*, theſe your pious Teachers are;
If theſe not all, but others boaſt your Care;
How many ſuch whom ſenſeleſs Learning makes
As wretched Blockheads as the others Rakes.
Hold --- hold --- again thus interrupts, my Friend,
Stop here, good Sir, and let your Satire end:
How vain, how needleſs! give the Purpoſe o'er,
Folly's a boundleſs Sea without a Shore;

As the light Bark is on the Waters toſt,
Thy Pen's amidſt the floating Billows loſt,
As ſoon you might the Sea's mad Wave contain,
As Folly's wide Prerogative reſtrain;
Nor Fops, nor Fools you ever can deſtroy,
For who will mind the Satire of a Boy.

Yet ſtill in vain I curb th' unruly Pen
Still it purſues and ſtrikes at Fools again.
But what Misfortune has the Verſe befell,
Convey'd, how ſudden, to the crowded Mall.
Here Folly reigns, behold her num'rous Tribe,
Which Fool, which Coxcomb ſhall I firſt deſcribe:
Loſt in the thronging Tumult of Conceit,
The Verſe forſakes, and Satire would retreat;

But now too late, no Way is left to go,
Plac'd in between a Blockhead and a Beau:
Here doom'd to bear the vaſt Impertinence
Of Wretches void of Learning as of Senſe.
See now a Train of Ladies ſailing by,
Strait whips the double Concave to the Eye;
The Laugh, the Sneer, the Look without the Glaſs
Denote the Blockhead and confirm the Aſs:
There ſtalks a Creature ſome might call a Man,
Playing the Monkey with a Lady's Fan:
Lo! there a bluſt'ring Hector from the Wars,
Behind a Row of Smock-fac'd Sons of *Mars*.
Here Fools of ev'ry Kind --- Fops, Rakes, and Cits
Among the reſt the worſt of Fools, the Wits.
Say where ſhall thoſe who Senſe or Thought admire,
Free, undiſturb'd, amidſt the Town retire.

No—Here's no Safety, here no Refuge found,
Where Nonſenſe rules and Vanities abound.

Behold the Stage, where *Shakeſpear* once could charm,
And *Rowe* with ſacred Fire each Boſom warm:
E'en there low Folly finds a kind Retreat,
Whilſt *Shakeſpear*'s trod beneath the Dancer's Feet.
To what low Ebb is Taſte and Judgment grown,
That Senſe muſt need a Dance, to pleaſe the Town.
Soft *Otway*'s Lines ſound tedious to the Pit,
And all expectant for * *Auriol* ſit.
Bluſh, ſenſeleſs Audience, bluſh to ſee a Play'r,
(Whoſe Sounds of Senſe ſhould charm th'attentive Ear)
Go ſilent off, or ſeldom more can boaſt
Than the poor Gall'ry's half-ſtrain'd Praiſe at moſt:
Yet

* A favourite Dancer.

Yet if * *Faneton* ſhakes her ſlender Feet,
How the loud Thunder clatters thro' the Pit:
How oft we ſee the Hero half divine,
In noble Worth and gen'rous Paſſion ſhine
We ſee him fetch the laſt dear parting Breath,
And greatly bear the Agonies of Death.
Lo! the Scene ſhifts and ſee the Hero paſs,
A mimick Sir and now is turn'd an Aſs.
How ill proportion'd! what a monſtrous Thing!
Thus † *Nab* To-morrow ſwells into a King:
No Wonder Follies thus o'er-run the Stage,
Since nought but Folly takes the ſenſeleſs Age;

What

* *Auretti.*

† *Abel Drugger*, a low Character of Mr. G——*k*'s in *Ben. Johnſon's Alchymiſt.*

It were to be wiſh'd that Perſons of great Abilities for the Stage (inſtead of being ſeen in the mean Characters they often are) would ſtudy and play thoſe more ſuitable to their Capacities, and to the Taſte of Judges of Theatrical Performances.

What Shame to ſee, as I myſelf have ſeen,
When well-play'd * *Shylock* grac'd the lively Scene;
A Stage-Box Beau, who ſat a finiſh'd Aſs,
And play'd at *Peep-bo* with a Spying-Glaſs,
Coxcomb! ſuch Wretches would I more deſpiſe
Than Ideots Nature ne'er intended wiſe:
Expell'd the Houſe was ev'ry Fool like theſe,
More Men of Senſe would come, leſs Farces pleaſe.
F——g by himſelf had mimick'd o'er his Tea,
For *F——* and † Fool alike in Sound agree.

But *B——n* calls, fly thither ſtrait my Pen,
Again he calls, the Bull-Dog barks again ----
The Kennel opens --- ſee the wretched Crew ----
How baſe the Scene preſented to the View, Among

* An admirable Character in *Shakeſpear*'s *Merchant of Venice*, then beautifully repreſented by Mr. *Macklin*. *Jan.* 1ſt.

† At leaſt in the Character of *Punch*.

Among the Boxers ſee my Lord and 'Squire,
All Hounds alike, for all the Pack admire.
But lo! the Curs for bloody Fight prepare,
And roaring Oaths loud bellow deſp'rate War;
Whilſt all the Gall'ry is in Praiſes loſt
On him, the worthieſt Cur that worries moſt.
So when two Maſtiffs, better Dogs than they,
In *James*'s Market mix the noiſy Fray,
Before the ſnarly Fight is half begun
Lo! hooting Butchers from the Shambles run,
Redoubled Noiſe promotes the fav'rite Cauſe,
Whilſt the poor Curs loſe Blood and gain Applauſe.
But ſee the Kennel turn'd a publick School,
Where 'Squires and Coachmen may be Brutes by Rule:

Mufflers

Mufflers for thoſe the naked Fiſt may fright,
For here young Lords and Puppies learn to fight.
Did *Britain* boaſt no better Arts than theſe,
Let ev'ry worthleſs Art in *Britain* ceaſe,
A Boxer be the Great Man's conſtant Gueſt,
And ev'ry Man of Fortune, turn a BEAST.

FINIS.